

THE
Chap-Book
SEMI-MONTHLY

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Please Mention the CHAP-BOOK

THE FAIRY CHANGELING

DERMOD O'BYRNE of Omah town
In his garden strode up and down,
He pulled his beard and he beat his breast;
And this is his trouble and woe confessed:

"The good-folk came in the night, and they
Have stolen my bonny wean away,
Have put in his place a changeling,
A weashy, weakly, wizen thing!

From the speckled hen nine eggs I stole,
And lighting a fire of a glowing coal,
I fried the shells, and I split the yolk;
But never a word the stranger spoke:

A bar of metal I heated red
To frighten the fairy from its bed,
To put in the place of this fretting wean
My own bright beautiful boy again.

But my wife had hidden it in her arms,
And cried 'For shame!' on my fairy charms;
She sobs, with the strange child on her breast:
'I love the weak, wee babe the best!'"

To Dermot O'Byrne's the tale to hear
The neighbours came from far and near:
Outside his gate, in the long boreen,
They cross themselves, and say between

Their muttered prayers, "He has no luck!
For sure the woman is fairy-struck,
To leave her child a fairy guest,
And love the weak, wee wean the best!"

DORA SIGERSON.

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CLEOPATRA

BY A. E. FORIE

TWO LETTERS AND A POSTAL CARD

I

MY DEAREST LUCY:—Here is my visit to Sybil nearly over and I have n't written to you yet, but it's because I simply have n't had time. I have been doing something every moment, and whatever fault I might find, if I wished to, I must say Sybil has done her best to entertain me. She is very much altered since we were all school girls together; grown so plain (not that she ever was beautiful, was she?), but you know her mouth was very pretty. Now, I don't know, but I suspect she has a couple of what Dickie calls "hired teeth", because the shape, or expression, of her lips has altered. Perhaps it's disappointment at not having had an offer yet, for I don't suppose she has, as she is n't married, and seems to have had no interesting experiences to tell of. Of course she always did dress like a guy,—positively I was ashamed when we went out together, and had to add a knot of ribbon collar, and a width to her sleeves, just for self-protection. I think it must have been her *mind* we admired at school, was n't it? or something of the sort, for she still says a clever thing once in a while; not exactly often, but still frequently enough to remind you of what she did once. She looks like a well-preserved woman of—say—three years older than she really is, and would n't help her looks along for anything in the world! Not that I advocate cosmetics, as you know. I never use them at all myself, except days when I'm feeling badly, or evenings when I want especially to make an impression, for some reason or other. Then I call the use of a very little perfectly legitimate. But, dear me, what a time I have putting it on! Sybil never leaves me alone for a moment! Our rooms are together, and she dresses mostly in mine. I actually have to go into the bath room, lock

the door, turn on the water, and pretend I'm taking a bath, to get a moment to myself, with my little pocket box of red and white powder! One night I could n't make that opportunity, and the family nearly bored me to death with enquiries about my health and fatigue, and wanted to give up going to a dance on my account! I shall never forget that party! I hate to visit people with families, don't you? Not that Sybil's were n't charming to me, they were perfectly lovely, and I think really enjoyed meeting me tremendously. But, my dear! think of trying to give a smart dinner party with two old maid aunts, and one under-age boy, who always insisted on being at the table! And then when we went anywhere! we were a perfect caravan and had to go in relays, or in a procession of carriages! Not that they do n't know how the thing ought really to be done, Sybil is exceedingly well born, there's no denying that, and you can tell it from the furniture and old portraits, which are perfect in style and taste, and fit in everywhere, and have n't Duveen's and Cypher's price mark on them, either. So Sybil has a very swell little trap of her own, and a charming little footman, with a quite correct livery; but these things don't seem essential to her,—I believe she could get along without them. There always was something lacking in her; I used to notice it in the old days.

I am coming home the day after to-morrow. My visit is n't really up; I planned to stay two weeks, as they asked me, but I can't stand it. I said I would at first, and that's the trouble; but you see I had forgotten what these small towns are like. *My dear!* Such parties! like children's affairs! and such conversations! Every girl I've met here asked me if I don't love Trilby, and if I've seen the play, and to please tell them all about it. I told Sybil's mother I'd been twice, but the people with me had been so amusing I did n't follow much of the play. You ought to

have seen her expression! It was the day she came to ask me to wear one of my other evening gowns, instead of my white satin ball dress, at the rest of their fiddle-dy-dee parties. You know my white satin, the best thing I have, and the most becoming,—the one with the shoulder-straps that don't go over the shoulders but around the arms. Somebody or other had said it was too décolleté, or something like that. Did you ever hear of anything so ridiculous? Probably some girl with a scrawny neck!

The men are delightful, really so devoted, not half so careless or negligent as most New York men, and fall earnestly in love with you. But, on the other hand, they're entirely too timid,—never take the slightest liberties. However, I suppose that's more the girl's fault than theirs. It's been my experience when a girl's bored by a man's not going too far with her, she has only herself to blame.

But to tell you the real purpose of this letter. What I want you to do is, to send me a telegram immediately on receipt of this, sign it mother, and say I am wanted home at once, some social engagement I cannot miss, so that Sybil will realize I can't help breaking short my visit to her. You see they've made plans for next week, so I must have a good excuse for disappointing them. Good-bye. Don't forget to send the telegram *at once*. My *clothes* have been a *huge success*, and I've had a lovely time, but I don't believe in wearing out one's welcome, do you? How is Harry? Still devoted?

With love and kisses,

BLANCHE,

II

MY DEAR LUCY:

I know Blanche is writing you, and so I thought, without saying a word to her, I'd run up to my room and write you

a few lines on my own account. Please do n't believe one-half the nice things she 's saying of us, because it 's only her dear nature, that makes her enjoy her visit amongst us provincials! It simply does all of us good to see how she enjoys our unconventional little pleasures, and mother and both my aunts, not to mention the rest of us, are completely won by her. I did n't know she had such adaptability, but she seems to fit right into everything, except perhaps our rather high necked evening dresses, but even then when mother spoke to her she gave in most gracefully, and we 're sure she 'll build a second story to the shoulder straps of her white satin gown, when she goes home. Mother says all town people want is to come in contact with country people once in a while to strike a happy medium for themselves at once. Blanche has n't changed one bit, if anything, she 's grown younger. It 's perfectly wonderful. She certainly is healthier than when at school, for she has splendid colour, and her complexion is very much improved. This visit has shown the real woman underneath what some people who did n't know her, perhaps, would call a slightly frivolous exterior. She was so sweet just now, as she decided to write to you. She put her arms about my neck, and said she was going to write you what a perfectly lovely time she was having, and that she could live with us forever, and hoped nothing horrid would happen to cut short her visit. She had a sort of presentiment as if something might, and it would break her heart.

Now, why I go into all this is, especially, because I do n't want you to believe all she says, and think it 's a paradise here, and then be disappointed, for mother joins me in begging you to come to us for a fortnight on the 20th, the day after Blanche goes home. We can give only the simplest sort of amusement but can offer you the very greatest welcome, not only from our own little family here but from the

whole town! Do write that you will come. Blanche has encouraged me into not letting old school friendships go the way of our dolls. They are like small children in a family, when they die no new little ones that may come can take the place of the ones that are gone. So do come to us, will you? Pack up your very simplest ball dress, (the *highest neck*, not the *highest price*.) My two maiden aunts are both Miss Granises', I'm afraid, and very lovable, as I don't doubt she is. Mother joins me in love and hoping to see you on the 20th.

As ever,

SYBIL.

P. S. I kept this letter over night to post, and this morning early came a telegram from Blanche's mother,—isn't it a pity! She must leave to-day. We are in an awful mix-up, because we'd accepted several invitations for the rest of the week. Little parties given especially in Blanche's honor. But of course she must not disappoint her mother. Now won't *you* come on the day after to-morrow, instead of the 20th? *Do!*

S.

III

POST CARD

DEAR S:

I waited to answer your letter until I saw Blanche, and now it is Sunday night, not a stamp in the house, and as this must reach you to-morrow, I hope you will excuse the post card. I'd *dearly* love to come, but I simply *can't!* It is *sweet* of you to ask me,—but Blanche says, I have no dresses that would do at all. We go to Narragansett in five days for the summer. Papa has taken the most expensive cottage there. Blanche says she had an ideal time with you, and from her discription I should imagine she had. It is

cruel I can't come. You must pay me a visit some time,—
next Lent, maybe.

Lots of love,

L,

CLYDE FITCH.

WITHOUT PREJUDICE

A NORTHERN SEASONAL AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE—THE REGENERATION OF OLD EDINBURGH—GRANT ALLEN'S NEW ALLEGORY—THOMAS HARDY'S "JUDE THE OBSCURE"—GEORGE MERIDITH'S "AMAZING MARRIAGE."

TILL I went to Edinburgh I did not know what the "*Evergreen*" was. Newspaper criticisms had given me vague misrepresentations of a Scottish "*Yellow Book*" calling itself a "*Northern Seasonal*." But even had I seen a copy myself I doubt if I should have understood it without going to Edinburgh; and even had I gone to Edinburgh I should still have been in twilight had I not met Patrick Geddes, Professor of Botany at the University of Dundee. For Patrick Geddes is the key to the Northern position in life and letters. The "*Evergreen*" was not established as an antidote to the "*Yellow Book*," though it might well seem a colour counter-symbol—the green of spring set against the yellow of decadent leaves. It is, indeed, an antidote, but undesigned; else had not yellow figured so profusely upon the cover. The "*Evergreen*" of to-day professes to be inspired by the "*Evergreen*" which Allen Ramsey published in 1724, to stimulate a return to local and national tradition and living nature. Patrick Geddes and Colleagues, who publish it and other books—on a new system of giving the author all the profits, as certified by a chartered accountant—inheriting Ramsey's old home.

That is to say, they are located in a sort of "University Settlement," known as Ramsay Garden, a charming collection of flats, overlooking from its castled hill the picturesque city, and built by the many-sided Professor of Botany, and they aspire also to follow in "the gentle shepherd's" footsteps as workers and writers, publishers and builders. In fact, their aim is synthesis, construction, after our long epoch of analysis, destruction. They would organise life as a whole, expressing themselves through educational and civic activities, through art and architecture, and make of Edinburgh the "Cit  du Bon Accord" dreamed of by Elis e Reclus. They feel acutely "the need of fresh readings in life, of fresh groupings in science, both now mainly from the humanist's side, as lately from the naturalist's side." In this University Settlement the publishing and writing department is to represent the scriptorium of the ancient monasteries.

Of the local and national traditions this new Scottish school is particularly concerned to foster the incipient Celtic renaissance, and—what is more interesting to outsiders—the revival and development of the old Continental sympathies of Scotland. The ancient league with France has deeply marked Scotch history, and even moulded Scotch architecture. As Disraeli said in his inaugural address on this institution as Lord Rector of the University of Glasgow, "it is not in Scotland that the name of France will ever be mentioned without affection." So, among the endless projects of the effervescent Professor, is one for reviving the Scotch college in Paris—the original building happening still to survive—and making it a centre for Scottish students and Scottish culture in the gay city. Thus, while the men of the "*Evergreen*" "would renew local feeling and local colour," they "would also express the larger view of Edinburgh as not only a National and Imperial but a European city—the larger

view of Scotland, again as in recent, in mediæval, most of all in ancient times, one of the European Powers of Culture—as of course far smaller countries like Norway are to-day.” An aspiration with which all intelligent men must sympathise. The quest at once of local colour and cosmopolitanism is not at all self-contradictory. The truest cosmopolitanism goes with the intensest local colour, for otherwise you contribute nothing to the human treasury and make mankind one vast featureless monotony. Harmonious diversity is the true cosmopolitan concept, and who will not applaud this desire of Edinburgh to range itself again amongst the capitals of culture? Why should it take its tone from London? That centripetal force which draws villages to towns and towns to capitals everywhere tends to concentrate in one city a country’s culture, and to brand as provincial that which is not of the centre. Often enough it is the capital which is “provincial” in so far as the word denotes the mistaking of what is petty and temporary for what is widest and most permanent in thought and life. In civic intelligence, indeed, many a provincial city puts London to shame. It is notorious how the best intellect of every country drifts towards the metropolis, which, though its large fusion of many-coloured individualities tends to a wider, a more universalised outlook, may yet rob each individual of his specific colour. We all recognise, for example, the intellectual “*article de Paris*.” It is almost impersonal—the product of objective cerebration, as it were—as if, indeed, the wit were produced by that subtle electric fluid Alexandre Dumas called “*Parisine*.” In great cities one’s thinking is done for one by a kind of “logical machine” worked by nobody in particular. For special flavours and idiosyncrasies of thinking one must go to the country; and, indeed, all that is distinctive in creative work is done by men who live away from towns. The French author is too fond

of his Paris ; he becomes over-civilised and anæmic. When a breath of freshness is wafted into French literature, it is from those lands of gay sun or those seas of chill fog in which Pierre Loti has voyaged. How refreshingly bloom the posies of Provence among the hot-house flowers of Paris ! Perhaps Daudet had done stronger work had he stayed in the South. For the local and the universal are not antithetic. The local is but a particular expression of the universal, and the great artist is he who shows the universal immanent in the particular. Our English men of letters abhor the town, and if now and then a great man does abide herein, it is because he has the gift of solitude amid crowds, and is not obnoxious to the contagion of the common thought. The Scotch School, though its effort to emancipate itself from the intellectual thralldom of London is to be commended, does not escape the dangers that lie in wait for all schools, which upset one convention by another. Still a school of thought which is also a school of action has in itself the germs of perpetual self-recuperation.

Yes, there can be little danger of sinking into barren formulæ, into glib æsthetic prattle about Renascence, in a movement of which one expression is the purification of those plaguy, if picturesque, Closets, which are the foul blot upon the beautiful Athens of the North. Those sunless courts, entered by needles' eyes of apertures, congested with hellish, heaven-scaling barracks, reeking with refuse and evil odours, inhabited promiscuously by poverty and prostitution, worse than the worst slums of London itself—how could they have been left so long to pollute the fairest and well-nigh the wealthiest city in the kingdom ? “Do you wonder Edinburgh is renowned for its medical schools ?” asked the Professor grimly, as he darted in and out among those foul alleys, explaining how he was demolishing this and reconstructing that—at once a Destroying Angel and a Redeemer.

Veritable ghettos they seemed, these blind alleys of gigantic habitation, branching out from the High Street, hidden away from the superficial passer-by faring to Holyrood. They were the pioneers of the Trans-Atlantic sky-builders, were those old burghers, who, shut in about their castled hill by the two lochs, one of which is now the enchanting Princes Street, were fain to build heavenwards as population grew.

It was a stormy morning when the mercurial Professor of Botany, recking naught of the rain that saturated his brown cloak, itself reluctantly donned, led me hither and thither, through the highways and byways of old Edinburgh. Everywhere a litter of building operations, and we trod gingerly many a decadent staircase. Sometimes a double row of houses had already been knocked away, revealing a Close within a Close, eyeless house behind blind alley, and even so the diameter of the court still but a few yards. What human ant-heaps, what histories, farces, tragedies played out in airless tenebrosity! The native writers seemed to have strangely neglected the artistic wealth of all this poverty: pathos and humour reside, then, only in villiages! Thrums and Drumtochty and Galloway exhaust the human tragic-comedy. Ah! my friends, go to the ant-hill and be wise! The Professor of Botany—seeming now rather of entomology—explained the principal upon which he was destroying and rebuilding. One had to be cautious. He pointed out the head of a boy carved over one of the archways, the one survivor of a fatal subsidence many years ago, when the ground floor of one of the gigantic houses was converted into a shop, with plate-glass windows in lieu of the solid stonework. "Heave awa'!" cried a piping voice amid the *débris*: "I'm no dead yet." The Professor's own destruction was conservative in character, for it was his aim to preserve the ancient note in the architecture, and to make a

clean old Edinburgh of a dirty. Air and light were to be no longer excluded, and outside every house, as flats or storeys are called, a balcony was to run, giving on sky and open ground. Eminent personages, ancestrally connected with ancient demesnes, long perverted into pigsties, had been induced to repurchase them, thus restoring an archaic flavour of aristocratic prestige to these despised quarters. The moral effect of grappling with an evil that had seemed so hopeless could not fail to be inspiring; and as we plodded through the pouring streets, "I will remove this, I will reconstruct that," cried the enthusiastic Professor, till I almost felt I was walking with the Emperor of Edinburgh. But whence come the sinews of war? Evidently no professor's privy purse would suffice. I gathered that the apostle of the sanitary picturesque had inspired sundry local capitalists with his own patriotic enthusiasm. What a miracle, this trust in a man overbrimming with ideas, the brilliant biological theoriser of "The Evolution of Sex" in the Contemporary Science Series, the patron of fantastic artists like John Duncan! Obviously it is his architectural faculty that has saved him. There stand the houses he has built—visible, tangible, delectable; concrete proofs that he is no mere visionary. And yet we may be sure the more frigid society of Edina still looks askance on this dreamer in stone and fresco; for after all Edinburgh, as Professor Blackie said, is an "East-windy, west-endy city." Cold and stately it sits on its height with something of the austere mournfulness of a ruined capital. But we did not concern ourselves about the legal and scholastic quarters, the Professor and I. We penetrated into inhabited interiors in the Closets, meeting strange female ruins on the staircases, or bonny housewives in bed-sitting rooms, in one of which a sick husband lay apologetically abed. And when even the Professor was forced at last to take refuge from the driving rain, it was in John

Knox's house that we ensconsed ourselves—the grim, unlovely house of the great Calvinist, the doorway of which fanatically baptised me in a positive waterfall, and in whose dark rooms, as the buxom care-taker declared in explaining the presence of an empty cage, no bird could live. It is not only in its Closets, methought, that Scotland needs regeneration. Many a spiritual blind-alley has still to receive sunshine and air, “sweetness and light.” So let us welcome the “*Evergreen*” and the planters thereof, stunted and mean though its growth be as yet; for not only in Scotland may they bring refreshment, but in that larger world where analysis and criticism have ended in degeneration and despair. Mayhap Salvation is of the Celt.

IN his newest attack upon the “holy estate,” *The British Barbarians* Mr. Grant Allen abandons the pretence of presenting a study of actual life. For if the British are Barbarians, it is by contrast with an imaginary Englishman of the twenty-fifth century. So undisguised is the allegory that there is no attempt to account for this figure, though he might easily have travelled backwards in Mr. Wells’ “*Time Machine*.”

There is, indeed, a curious affinity with Mr. Wells’ other book, “*The Wonderful Visitor*”; for, just as that bright angel darkened by contrast the human beings around him, so does Mr. Allen’s angelic visitor easily score off the primitive Britons of the nineteenth century. So far does this affinity go that both Mr. Wells’ angel and Mr. Allen’s advanced specimen are constrained by superior chivalry to relieve parlour-maids of their teatrays, and to inquire naively why gentlemen of position do not marry such attractive females. Moreover, they both protest by word and action against the rights of private property vested in the local squires. And yet Mr. Wells did not call his book “A

Hill-Top Novel." Mr. Allen's observation of human life and human character being as free from subtlety as the Spenserian philosophy, which is his fetic, and his prejudiced vision being unable to see life as it is, he is perhaps wise in drawing upon the future; it is a sure means of escaping contradiction for six centuries, if, indeed, his novel keep the hill-top so long. But if Mr. Allen means his Bertram Ingledew to be an average specimen of the twenty-fifth-century Briton, he must be indeed optimistic. It is nineteen centuries since Christ, and twenty-two since Plato; and still, on Mr. Allen's own showing, the British are barbarians. The Shelley-like optimism of Mr. Allen's ideals is curiously unscientific, and must surely cause his master many a dubious head-shake. It is good to find Mr. Allen himself in his preface once sceptically contemplating his own cocksureness, though one sympathises with his decision that it is each man's duty to utter what he feels the highest.

In this instance Mr. Allen's mission—and we are not to think the less of the apostle because, like St. Augustine, he is a converted sinner—leads him to gird at marriage through a new allegorical device, for his "advanced" visitor, who is certainly "forward" with the ladies, calmly classifies marriage and many other British institutions as *taboos*; and the notion of thus depolarising our manners so as to bring out their analogies with savage customs is both ingenious and humorous—though, for the rest, Grant Allen always seems to leave his rich natural humour below when he mounts his hill-top. Though there is "peace on earth," even the twenty-fifth century cannot apparently bring logic to all men; for Bertram Ingledew, despite his scrupulous acquiescence in the "taboos" of dress, yet violates local feelings by walking across a pheasant-preserve, and carrying the owner, who, like all British baronets, is short and stout and puffy, a hundred paces in his stalwart arms. Ingledew, who

is "all sweet resonableness," is also "an impulsive creature," and cannot resist the the "full crimson lips" of Frida, the taboo of which in favour of her husband he violently denounces, telling her that she is like a squaw, branded with the seal of her owner. "You must hide and stifle your native impulses," he says: "you are tabooed for life to Robert Montieth; I must needs respect his seal set upon you." And yet only a dozen pages later, where Frida is surrendering to the tempter, "When shall I see you again?" he asks passionately. "For now you belong to me. I sealed you with that kiss." Belong! Sealed! So much for the logic of Ingeldew and his creator.

AND now I approach—with trembling quill—the two leading novels of the past year, which, by an improbable coincidence, have been published almost simultaneously—"The Amazing Hardy" and "Meredith the Obscure": I mean "The Amazing Marriage," and "Jude the Obscure." In atmosphere and treatment, no books could be more dissimilar, and it is refreshing to turn from the Greek calm of Hardy's style to the romantic brilliance of Meredith's. But the style is not the man—at least, not superficially; the calm of Hardy masks a volcanic turbulence of revolt, while the tossing tumultuousness of Meredith's mind goes with a joyous acceptance of life and the brave colouring thereof.

Ere I started to read *Jude the Obscure* I had a clear idea of how my review of the book would commence. It was to take the shape of a respectable rebuke to Mr. Hardy for allowing his work to be mutilated in *Harper's Magazine*, and it was to animadvert upon his feeble defence of the expurgators. It is true that the serial-rights of a book are three times as valuable as the book-rights; but then, as Mr. Hardy's book-rights are sufficient for bread and butter, it

seemed to me a sacrilege for his masterpieces to be clipped and trimmed by editorial shears. No author of standing should use the serial form at all, if his audience cannot swallow him whole. The magazines—like the stage—should be left to the hack writer. But now that I have read *Jude the Obscure*, I am all agog to read the *Harper's* version. It should be the greatest "curiosity of literature" extant. How this book could be Bowdlerised and made acceptable to the American mind passes my comprehension. Here is a novel with the trail of sex over every page, the whole theme of which is a sexual situation of extreme delicacy, worked out through a long series of indelicate episodes, a narrative which is absolutely point less and meaningless except for its sexual significance. That any editor capable of swallowing such a camel should strain at gnats is indeed almost as incredible as the possibility of making a camel into a gnat. To cut out the "improper passages" and leave the story still coherent seems as difficult as to cut the pound of flesh from Antonio without spilling a drop of blood. One has already heard amusing stories of yawning gaps—of a child turning up mysteriously in the Magazine. What can be more illegitimate (artistically) than an unexplained child? But it is not by its sexual side that "Jude" should really be unacceptable to America; it is by the larger questionings of destiny that underlie it. But such is the purblind wisdom of the public—to kick at the superficially dangerous, and be unconscious of the more insidious peril. For "Jude" is not the "obscene," as it has been called—it is "douloureux et blasphématoire." The best criticism of *Jude the Obscure* that I have seen was written by the brothers De Goncourt, from whom I have just quoted; and, like so much criticism, it was written by men who had not enjoyed the advantage of reading the book. It is a novel of their own, dealing with the artistic life—it is in *Manette Salomon*—that this review of "Jude" is to be



THE LOVE OF A SUMMER



A BOOK OF VERSES UNDER
A JUG OF WINE, A LOAF OF
BESIDE ME SINGING IN
OH, WILDERNESS WERE PAR

*I would rather be loved by you, sweet,
Than by all of the world beside,
I would rather one day with you, sweet,
On the brink of a summer tide,
With a song we could sing together,
And a crystal of ruddy wine,
Than a century's summer weather
And another love than thine.*

*I would rather be crowned with you, sweet,
Than to king with the fairest queen.
I would rather be poor with you, sweet,
'Neath the shadowy beechen green,
With your cheek on my own cheek dream
And your kisses upon my face,
Than to lie amid treasures gleaming
In another love's embrace.*

*I would rather be near to you, sweet,
Than to win an immortal name!
I would rather be dear to you, sweet,
Than to leave an undying fame
In the minds of a mighty throng, sweet,
For man's memory fades away,
And there's nothing that lasts so long, sweet,
As the love of a summer day.*

JOHN BEN

SUMMER DAY

SEES UNDERNEATH THE BOUGH,
A LOAF OF BREAD, AND THOU
SINGING IN THE WILDERNESS :
SS WERE PARADISE ENOW

OMAR KHÁYYÁM.

you, sweet,
beside,
you, sweet,
tide,
together,
te,
rather

with you, sweet,
est queen.

you, sweet,
green,
cheek dreaming
te,
reaming

ou, sweet,
name!
ou, sweet,
fame

rong, sweet,
ay,
so long, sweet,
day.

JOHN BENNETT.



found. For Paris has long since known those artistic fashions which are just beginning to dawn upon belated Britain.

"There are in the artist's life days in which he has such inspirations, days in which he experiences the need of shedding and spreading abroad all that his heart's depths hold of desolation and ulceration. Like the man whose cries mark the agony of his limbs, of his body, the artist must on such days cry out with the pain of his impressions, of his nerves, of his ideas, of his revolts, of his disgusts, and of all the bitterness he has felt, suffered, consumed, in contact with beings and things. Whatever in humanity, in his century, in life, has attacked him, crushed him, wounded him—he is unable any longer to keep in: he vomits it in some page, emotional, sanguinary, horrible. 'T is the unstanching of a wound, 't is as if in a talent the gall burst, which is in some geniuses the pocket of masterpieces. There be days on which every artist throws open his instrument—be it violin, picture or book—in a creation in which his soul shudders, one of those palpitating^r passionate, tempestuous pages in which blend the agony and blasphemy of the crucified; days in which he finds enchantment in work which wounds him, but which will pass on this self-inflicted wound to the public; days in which his art seeks the excess of painful sensation, the emotion of despair, the revenge of his own sensitiveness upon the sensitiveness of others." Such a piece of art is Hardy's *Jude the Obscure*. All the bitterness of his pessimism, all his sense of the *lachrymæ rerum*, of the remorseless struggle for existence, and the big and little ironies of life, all the insurgence of his heart against the injustices of Nature, complicated by the unjust institutions of Society—marriage, social inequality, and the rest—all find expression in this latest work of the writer who has defined writers as souls in revolt. One thinks irresistibly of the coster's Schopenhauer:—

“’E makes yer thinks that life’s a blank,
A disgustin’ dreary dezzit;
It aint exactly *wot* ’e says,
It’s the n-a-a-asty wye ’e sez it.”

The tragedy of Jude is the tragedy of unfulfilled aspirations. Thwarted by the world without and the flesh within, Jude goes to the devil. I have read nothing more masterly than the earlier portions of this book: the restful beauty of the writing, the pathos of the sensitive Jude’s craving for knowledge, the vigorous brushwork of the picture of his awakening to sex, the pervasive almost epic sense of the workings of love in swain and lass, fascinate, soothe, startle, and move to tears. Surely, one thinks, perusing the story of Jude’s seduction by Arabella, surely no other Englishman has so transferred to paper the reality of things. But as the story progresses, a sexual switchback of ups and downs—of a woman who would and wouldn’t, and a man who would n’t and would, of a woman who did and did n’t, and a man who could and should n’t, of a couple who married and divorced, and embraced and disembraced, and parted and joined, and re-engaged and disengaged themselves, and finally re-married their original partners—to the accompaniment throughout of a chorus of comment from strangely indelicate acquaintances—all this, in a tedious rigmarole, becomes a vexation and a weariness even to the flesh. Not that the large outlines of a symmetrical structure do not loom through this tangle of tantalizing episodes; and the gradual development in which Sue, the tameless pagan and joyous freelance, is brought to her knees at the Christian altar, while Jude the Christian becomes heathen and rebellious, is both subtle and splendid. Unfortunately one does not believe in the initial postulate on which the whole story hangs—the marriage of Sue to Phillotson, the elderly schoolmaster, who is the only convincing figure in the book.

Despite the author's uneasy explanations, I find it improbable that Sue, a girl with her pretty eyes wide open, with a pagan feeling of the joy of life, should give herself to a snuffy old schoolmaster. Of course one may fall back on the solution that Sue is a woman, and Hardy, we hear, is a part master in women. But, conceding this marriage as the weakness of a piqued moment and an unprotected position, the device by which Nemesis restores the heartbroken Sue to her husband's arms is monstrous, clumsy, and incredible. Not for a moment do I believe in Father Time, the elderly infant with all the woe of the world in his eyes, whom Hardy has unconsciously adapted from *The Bab Ballads*. And when this "infant phenomenon" murders the two other children, and then himself, I find myself more on the brink of laughter than of horror. The step from the sublime to the ridiculous has been taken. I do not even realize the agony of Niobe-Sue; for these two children are merely nominal, sexless, "dreams of a shadow." We have never seen them, never heard their childish prattle, never gazed into their chubby faces, nor caught the flutter of white garments and pink ribbons. Hardy poses as a realist, yet he fails to convey to us the sense of real everyday existence, to suggest what these two children meant in the Jude and Sue *ménage*. But that would have been to relieve the gloom. And gloom is artistic, I grant you. Æschylus, whom Hardy appears to admire, would never have bated you a jot of tragic terror. But then the Greek artist dealt with grand outline figures, heroic, almost superhuman: he was not the modern artist of minute detail, pretending to paint the actual. Hardy's sombre imagination leads him to dwell almost lovingly on the shadows, and to pass lightly over the sunflecks. Moreover, had these two children been definitely visualised, the reader might have asked how two parents of the high culture and sensibility of Jude and Sue could have failed to legitimatise

them, seeing that their personal objections to marriage were rather whimsies than well-grounded reasons. Such selfishness is inconsistent with the real nobility that underlay the character of either. But then, had they married, they would have spoiled the *dénouement*. In fine, the more I probe the story, the more is it borne in upon me, that it is weak and artificial, a plot-scheme pulling the strings to work the figures, rather than figures inevitably working out their own destinies. Hardy is falling into the death-trap that awaits all novelists with fads to air and views of life to proclaim from house-tops or hill-tops. How much more refreshing the bucolic humors of *Under the Greenwood Tree* than the sardonic creation of Arabella, that rustic Messalina, coarse and heartless beyond conviction! Sue, her rival, is no more convincingly painted in: always provoking, always piquant, she never quite exists. Even Jude himself, elaborately as he is studied, remains the obscure. It is more pleasant to turn from the unrealities of Hardy's realism to contemplate the brilliancy of his workmanship and the fertility of his imagination. What a panorama of original scenes and situations! Who has devised a quainter episode—more grotesque, more pregnant with the tragi-comedy of things—than the scene in which the schoolmaster and his wife send each other notes by their innocent pupils, discussing the grim problem of their wedded life. What a memorable picture is that of Oxford seen from the outside, the reverse of the medal of which Mr. Pearsall Smith's *Youth of Parnassus* is the face. What Mr. George Moore did for the drawing-room by viewing it from the servants' hall, that Hardy has done for Oxford by looking at it from the standpoint of the *peri* without the gates, and of the native barbarian, indifferent to "the last enchantments of the Middle Age." It is rather crude, though, to call Oxford Christminster, Balliol College Biblioll, and the Master of Balliol

Tetuphenay, and to misinterpret Matthew Arnold's reference to "the home of lost causes." Crude, too, perhaps, is his philosophy of life, his resentful sense that in the human soul Nature has blunderingly evolved a consciousness to whose exquisite sufferings and aspirations she is callous and indifferent. A brilliant novelist is not necessarily a great philosopher. But, when all is said, 't is a strong and brave book, this *Jude the Obscure*, stronger in its weakness than the vast majority of novels in their strength. Hardy is your true knight of the doleful countenance, quixotically challenging at once Nature and Civilization. And he challenges our admiration, too, though he come off not without thumps in the quintain. The burning sense of injustice and unrighteousness, the large sympathy with all created things, the generous siding with the crowd rather than the cultured, with town before gown, with raw fact rather than academic abstraction, the fearless envisagement of existence—all these great qualities encourage the hope that Hardy will yet write the epic of the modern—some book that, free from the questionable psychology of "Tess" and "Jude" alike, shall carry on their splendid promise and link their high artistic purpose to unfaltering and immortal achievement.

NOTHING, on the other hand, could be less modern than Meredith's "Amazing Marriage." It is a romantic phantasmagoria rather than a novel. To speak after the fashion of the art critic, it is a characteristic Meredith, but not in his finest vein; it is distinctly inferior to "Lord Ormont and his Aminta." There is the unfailing artificial atmosphere which is a purely Meredithian creation, and makes his work an addition to, rather than a refraction of, Nature's handiwork. Amazing though the marriage be, it fails to amaze through two volumes, and I was more amazed by the bold good Buccaneer's marriage, which is not the

theme of the book, than by the marriage between Fleetwood and Carinthia, which is. Indeed, up till the marriage the story holds the attention, but after that it steadily degenerates into a brilliant bore; the obstinate whims and fancies, and psychical evolutions of the parted couple, being too long-drawn-out for the inherent interest of the situation. There is much psychological manœuvring and wagging of Dame Gossip's tongue before an abrupt final chapter, congested with happenings, winds up the shilly-shally, dilly-dally, as Meredith would say. Meredith is not a classic artist; he is riotously romantic; there is no proportion, no repose. To read "The Amazing Marriage" is like celebrating a literary Fifth of November, not leaving out a touch of fog; 't is a confusion of squibs, crackers, sky-rockets, golden-rain; and it fizzles out in the Roman candles of a monastery to which the hero retires to die of an overdose of asceticism. There is a young man who is reputed to be modelled on Robert Louis Stevenson, but who has nothing of Stevenson's lucid elegance of utterance. This wandering gentleman, like all the characters—down to the pugilist's *fiancée*, who marries him—talks and writes in the well-known Meredithrambic manner, there are moments in Meredith's novels when he reminds me of the toy-stages of my youth, with their gorgeous company of dashing figures, Buccaneers and Beauties, Pirates and Admirals, Pugilists and Jesters, and Ladies of Quality—the twopence-coloured variety, be it understood. In these moments the Master appears to me as a sort of cross between Ouida and Shakespeare—Ouida for the matter and Shakespeare for the manner. There are the same superhuman men and supernaturally beautiful women as in the work of the lady novelist, and the same exuberance of verbal expression as in the world's greatest poet. Pure poetry, indeed, is the stuff of countless passages in "The Amazing Marriage." Not

since Shakespeare has England produced a man with so extraordinary a gift of poetic expression, so marked an incapacity for saying simple things simply. Of the moderns Victor Hugo—childlike enough as a thinker—is perhaps his sole peer in this faculty of expressing x in terms of y . Meredith can see nothing for itself. Whatever his eyes lights on that must be straight way translated into another category. An abstract thought must become a concrete image, a visible thing must be turned into a thought. As with Browning, much of his subtlety is skin-subtlety—a verbal profundity rather than an intellectual.

The trick of changing the coins of language is easily learnt, and the minor poet may be made, if he neglects to be born. To call flame not flame, but a yellow flower, and when you see a yellow flower to cry fire, is a habit that may easily be acquired, and that is apt to grow upon one. Meredith's mind, however, effects such transmutations automatically; it is a seething cauldron of similes and metaphors and maxims; and, not content with those that he can work naturally into the story, he has to invent specially epigrammatic persons, and sometimes even books of maxims, to hold the over-spilth. The bold Buccaneer, who is the last person in the world we should suspect of literature, is as prolific of wise saws as Sir Richard Feverely himself. But when Meredith condescends to dip his ladle into the cauldron, we must shut our eyes and open our mouths and thank the gods for a feast, rare enough in these Trilby times. Wherefore I will end with a pious grace for those ravishing passages of poetry, now of emotion, now of scene-painting, with which *The Amazing Marriage* is studded, and for those coruscations of wit which enliven this gallant costume-piece, comparable on the whole to one of the lesser comedies of Shakespeare, and of a freer invention to boot. I remember looking through an American and presumably a pirated collec-

tion of pickings from Meredith, not to be bought in this slow old country. To see the wisdom and humor packed in that compass was to be reminded of Dodd's "Beauties of Shakespeare," and to exclaim enthusiastically that all your latter-day paradox-mongers, philosophers and poets, might niche in a corner of Meredith's brain. I tried to mark such "Beauties" in *The Amazing Marriage* but was soon fain to desist, for fear of scoring every page. Here is the pith of what may be called the social philosophy of Stevenson and Whitman. "For himself he was open with everybody, his philosophy not allowing that strangers existed on earth." And here is a lightning-sketch of a position. Chillon shows his sister Carinthia the portrait of a beautiful English girl. "He spoke indifferently, but as soon as she had seen the face inside it, with a look at him and a deep breath, she understood that he was an altered brother, and that they were three instead of two." Meredith, who shares Shakespeare's lack of restraint, has also Shakespeare's apparently contradictory gift of vivid brevity. For beauty and brevity combined, where, outside Shakespeare, shall we find a passage to match this description of Carinthia leaving her childhood's home, after the death of her parents?—"She was tearless. A phantom ring of mist accompanied her from her first footing outside the house. She did not look back. The house came swimming and plunging after her, like a special ship on big seas, and her father and mother lived and died in her breast; and now they were strong, consulting, chatting, laughing, caressing; now still and white, caught by a vapor that dived away with them either to right or left, but always with the same suddenness, leaving her to question herself whether she existed, for more of life seemed to be with their mystery than with her speculations."

I. ZANGWILL.



DRAWING FOR A POSTER

BY PAUL BERTHON

NOTES

¶ A Cleveland paper, ends an able review of Matthew Arnold's letters in the following manner:

"His beloved eldest daughter fell in love with a New Yorker, and the day came when an impertinent little Yankee Doodle pulled the gold-rimmed spectacles off Grandpa Arnold's nose. In two volumes."

¶ Nero fiddled while Rome was burning. At present Rome may do some fiddling, but it is probably Nero who is burning.

A FAULTY SONNET TO THE BOSTON OWLS

"To whit, to who!" so spake the Wordsworth owls;

And imitating them and their poor speech,

"To whit, to who!" Chicago owlets screech—

Most grammerless, most meaningless of howls!

Know well ye are the scorn of Boston fowls,

Ye owls who rashly break the sacred laws

Of holy Lindley Murray.—Pray to pause

And note well how a Boston owl can teach

To youths in their impressionable days—

Who wandering beneath the lovely moon,

Themselves to Nature's teachings do attune—

To them the Boston owl correctly says

These edifying words from out the gloom:

"To whit, to whit, to whom! To wait, to whom!"

¶ That the songs of Robert Franz are so little sung is not due to their age; they will never be old-fashioned. It is probably owing to the difficulty of their accompaniments, for one thing; and the fact that they are not of a catchy quality. Yet there are no more beautiful in the world. The May song—which is a mere snatch, but perfect—"Er ist gekom-

men," "The Bliss of Melancholy," and "The Woods," are faultless—and not hard to sing either.

Otto Dresel, who lived for years in Boston, and who was an intimate friend of Franz, wrote a rapturous panegyric of him and his songs for the *Atlantic Monthly* not very long ago, but nothing, it appears, can boom him into popularity. He is too rare, too choice, and too subtle in flavor. Occasionally a great singer—usually a German—selects one of his songs for a concert, but this is rare: for the most part his work is quite ignored.

Robert Franz died in 1892, at the age of seventy-seven. He composed a set of a dozen songs in 1837, which Schumann, among others greatly praised. He was deaf, like Beethoven; and was obliged, after some years of office in various universities as lecturer, organist and director, to resign his posts. After that disappointment he gave himself up entirely to composition and to editing Bach's, Handel's and other old masters' works. He wrote more than three hundred songs—and is forgotten! Rather say he was never known, outside a small and highly musical circle. All biographies put him at the head of his class, as a songwriter—the very best of contemporary composers.

¶ The man who would ever *say* that he understood woman is not the man who ever *could* understand her.

¶ Mrs. Lynn Lynton has been kindly telling the world how awful she found George Eliot when first she met her at the house of John Chapman. The description of the novelist is a marvellous affair and leads me unconsciously to wonder if Mrs. Linton knew what she was trying to say. How on earth could a woman who "held her arms and hands kangaroo-fashion, was badly dressed, had an unwashed, unbrushed, unkempt look altogether" have appeared "purely artificial?"



WHERE MINOR POETS ARE MADE

FROM A DRAWING BY E. H. NEW

WHEN Art reformed she came to town.
She donned a modish Paris gown.
She bound her hair in jeweled bands
And decked with rings her shapely hands.

She trod on velvet pile, she ate
From sparkling glass and glittering plate;
Forgot the wild Bohemian ways
And had her "evenings" and her "days,"
Where beaux and wits her time beguiled.

Philistia came and bowed and smiled
And made its self-complacent boast
Of "Art, Philistia's reigning toast."
Till, dreaming in the waning light
A vision crossed her inner sight :—

Again she roved by dale and down
With naked feet and scanty gown—
How sweet the leafy path, how good
The ruddy berries in the wood!"

She heard again the insistent call
Of rippling streams; the love of all
The olden freedom, and the stir
Of lawless life, came back to her.

She tore the jewels from her hair,
She fled adown the shining stair;
(Like that fair girl in story old,
What time the bells of midnight tolled.)

From out the portal passed a maid
With simple garb and loosened braid.
Henceforth whoso will walk with Art,
Shall find her close to Nature's heart.

¶ The puff-ball is living proof that there can be smoke without fire.

¶ Being a child of literary intentions and passing much of time in the company of books, I have come to feel a sense of personal indebtedness to the publisher who brings out a readable volume. I have come, also, to feel a sense of personal sorrow that the really readable volumes are so few and far between. But when, by pure and heavenly chance, I do come across so charming a little book as "The Invisible Playmate," by William Canton, I can't help saying at least a simple "I thank you" to the publishers—in this case, J. Selwin Tait & Sons of New York—and feeling better for a fortnight or more.

¶ The nearest approach to happiness is not having time to have to amuse yourself.

¶ Can the two-headed girl play besique with herself, or only solitaire.



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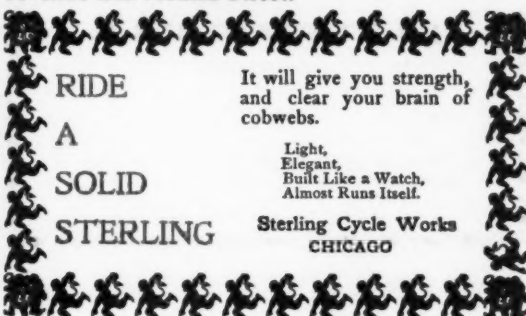
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